

## **Abstract**

Copepods are an important part of metacommunities in freshwater and marine ecosystems. Freshwater copepods occur at all continents and are found in almost every water habitat. These small invertebrates cannot actively disperse among habitats and therefore have to rely on vectors of passive dispersal. Copepods can produce diapause life forms and are therefore able to survive unfavorable conditions during the transport. Throughout the ontogenetic development from an egg to adult stage, they have to pass naupliar and copepodit life stages. Various evolutionary lineages of copepods developed diapause phase at different life stage. Hence it is possible to observe both diapausing eggs as well as diapausing adults. Discussed vectors of passive dispersal are wind, floods, animal fur, animal gut, but also human recreational and industrial activity. This work summarizes basic knowledge about the mechanisms of development of copepods diapausing life stages and about their passive dispersal.

**Key words:** passive dispersal, freshwater copepods, diapause